

Think Blue & Green

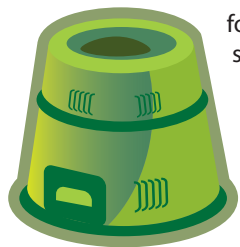


in 2015

Reduce Waste First

Every Year, Americans generate 250 million tons of waste – that's enough to bury more than 93,000 football fields in six feet of trash! As waste generation increases so too will the cost of waste management and the rate at which natural resources are depleted. Think green in 2015 and stop waste at the source.

- **Bring Your Own Bag.** Every year, Americans dispose of approximately 1 billion shopping bags, creating 300,000 tons of landfill waste. Using reusable shopping bags decreases the amount of non-biodegradable plastic buried in landfills and prevents litter from contaminating soil and water supplies. **Contact the City of Milpitas Reuse Line at (408) 586-2680 for a Free Reusable Bag.**
- **Take your own mug to the coffee shop** instead of using a disposable cup. Every paper cup saved helps keep our world's forests intact. Most coffee shops offer a discount when you remember to use your own mug.
- **Whenever possible, buy items in bulk** rather than multiple, smaller packages. This decreases the amount of packaging waste created. Most importantly, buy only what you will use!
- **Always use washable, not disposable, utensils and plates.** Plastic utensils are intended for one time use and can harbor bacteria when washed or reused.
- **Stop junk mail.** In America, more than 100 million trees are cut down every year to produce 100 billion pieces of junk mail. It's good to recycle junk mail, but it's even better to stop getting it. Go to **StopJunkMail.org** to find out how.



- **Try Composting.** In the U.S., yard trimmings and food scraps make up 27% of the national waste stream. Start a backyard composting pile or use a composting bin to process organic wastes from your kitchen and yard. Finished compost can be used as a free, nutrient-rich soil amendment for gardens or as a top-dressing for lawns. For more composting information and free workshops, visit **www.ReduceWaste.org** or call the **Rotline** at **(408) 918-4640**.

Wise Up About Water Use

Using water efficiently and saving energy are two practices that go hand in hand. Think blue in 2015 by using these easy tips to save water and cut utility bill costs:

Indoor Tips

- **Run your clothes washer and dishwasher with full loads only.** You can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.
- **Use water-efficient showerheads and faucet aerators.** They're inexpensive, easy to install, and can save up to 750 gallons a month. Call the **Santa Clara Valley Water District** at **(408) 265-2600** or go online at **www.ValleyWater.org** to receive free showerheads and faucet aerators for the bathroom and kitchen.
- **Turn off the water while brushing your teeth** and save 25 gallons a month.
- **Grab a wrench and fix that leaky faucet.** It's a low-cost, simple way to save 140 gallons of water a week.
- **Don't use running water to thaw food.** For food safety and water conservation, defrost food in the refrigerator.
- **When washing dishes, don't let the water run while rinsing.** Fill one basin or sink with soapy water and another with rinse water.
- **Water plants only when necessary.** More plants die from over-watering than from under-watering.

Outdoor Tips

- **Water outdoor plants before 5:00 a.m. instead of midday** to save 20 gallons a day.
- **Adjust your irrigation schedule throughout the year.** Cut it to a third in the fall and off during most winters and save over 20 gallons of water a day.
- **Use a broom instead of a hose to clean sidewalks.** This simple switch will save anywhere from 10 to 15 gallons a minute.
- **Apply 2 to 3 inches of mulch around trees and plants to reduce moisture loss** and save 20 gallons a day.
- **Adjust sprinklers to prevent overspray and runoff** to save 25 gallons a month.
- **Repair leaks and broken sprinkler heads.**

Lend a Hand with Litter



Not only do we need to conserve our water supply, we also need to protect it from litter and other pollutants. The City of Milpitas hosts annual creek clean ups in conjunction with Coastal Cleanup Day. For more information on how you can get involved, visit **www.ci.Milpitas.ca.gov** during August for more information about the event on **Saturday, September 19, 2015**. Go to **www.MyWatershedWatch.org** to learn more about how you can keep pollution out of local creeks and the Bay.

- **Keep lids closed on recycling and garbage containers.** This prevents loose pieces from escaping and becoming litter. Set out containers no more than 12 hours before and take back no later than 12 hours after your collection day (MMC V-200-3.31).
- **Carry a litterbag in your car.** This way, you'll always have a convenient place to throw away garbage until you find a proper means of disposal.
- **Secure your load if you carry loose materials in a truck.** Items that blow from or fall out of vehicles create traffic hazards as well as litter.
- **Set a good example by not littering.**